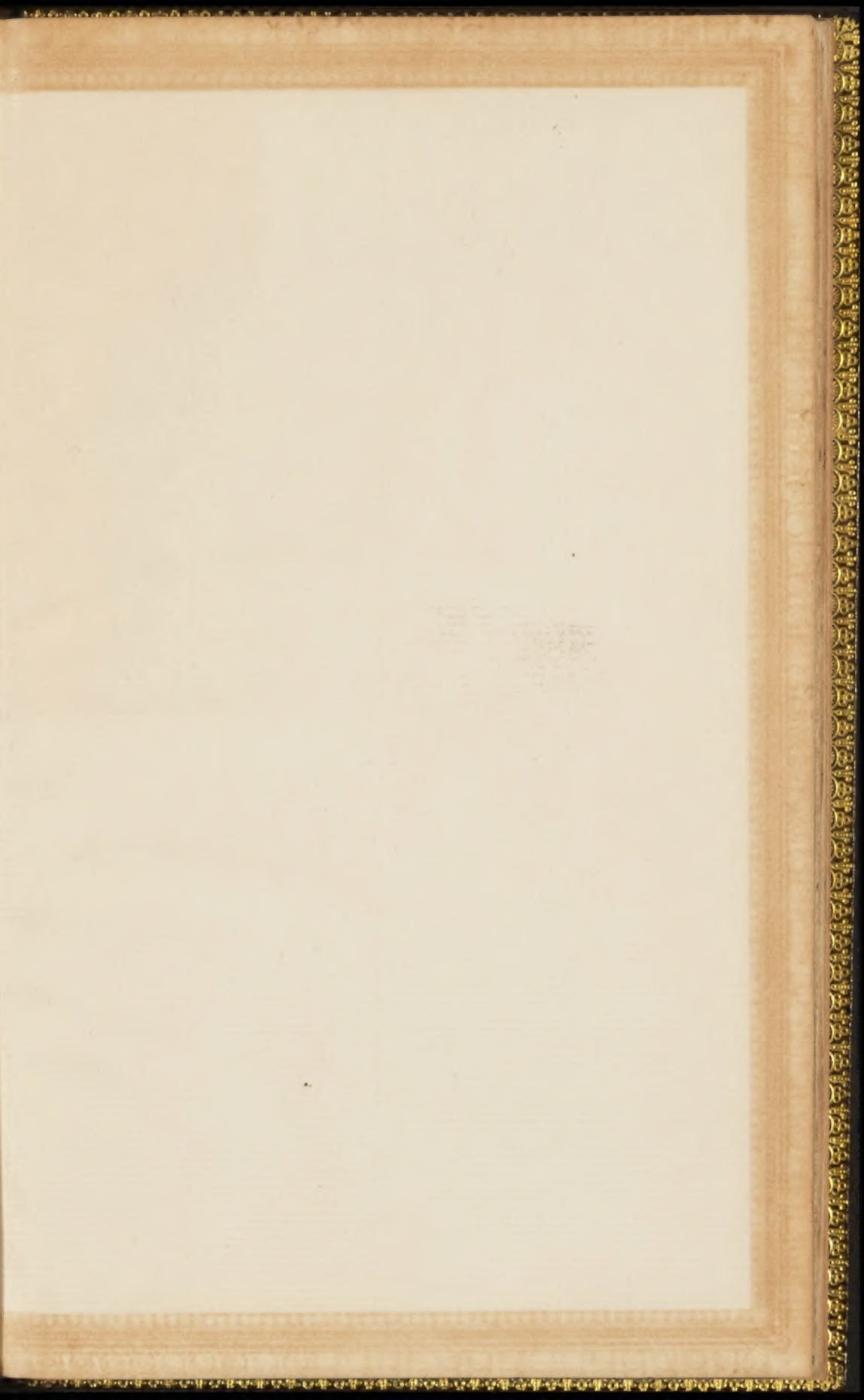


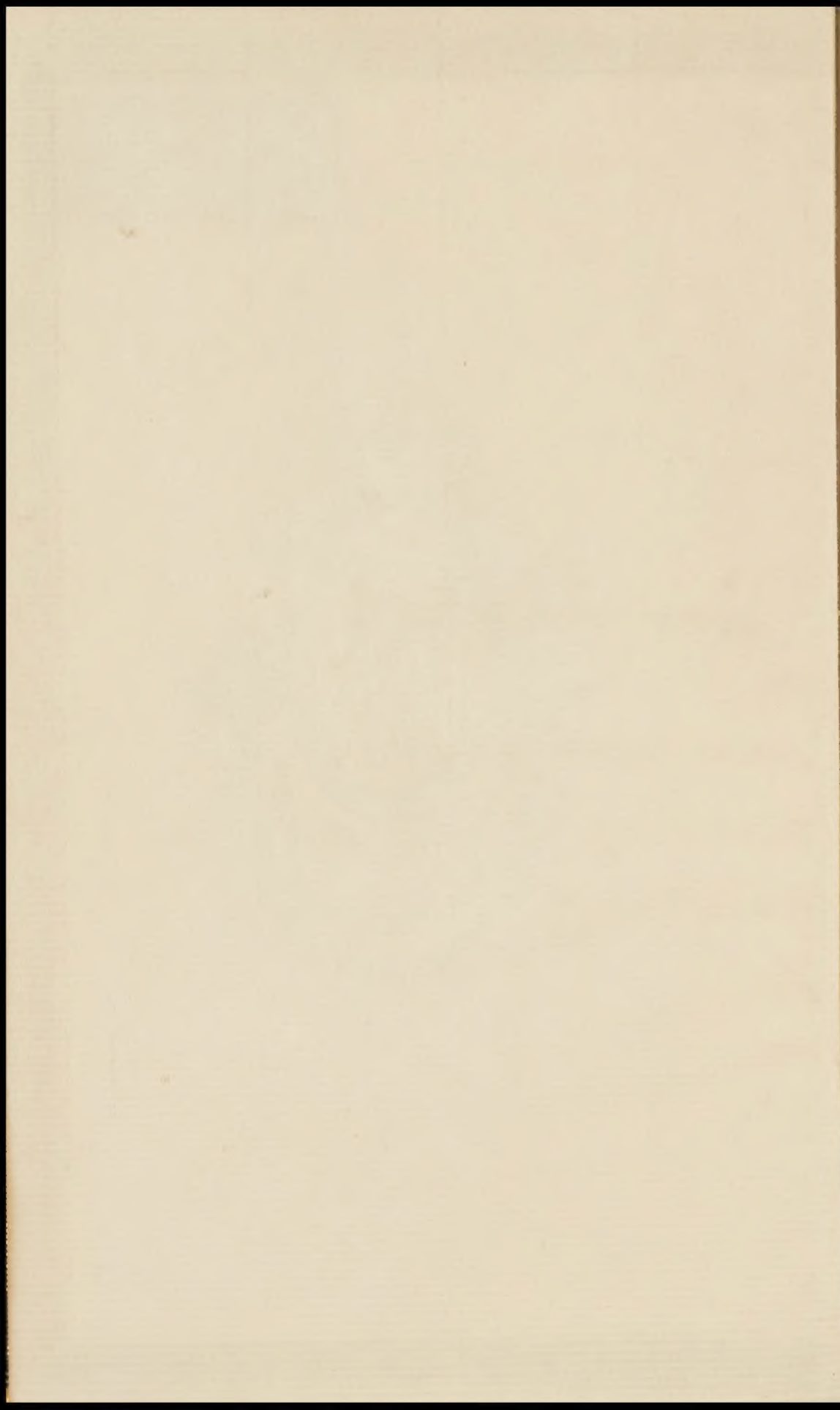




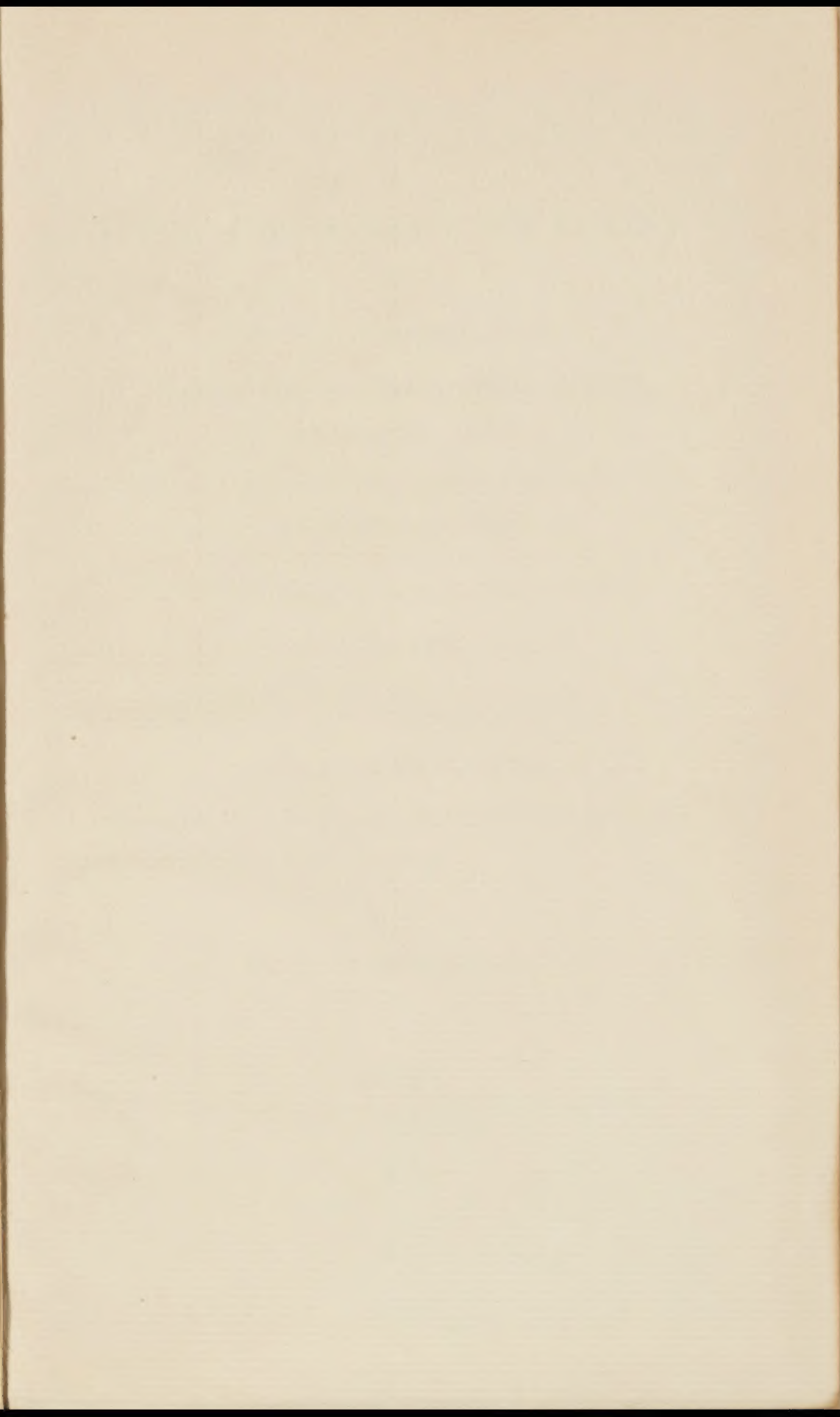
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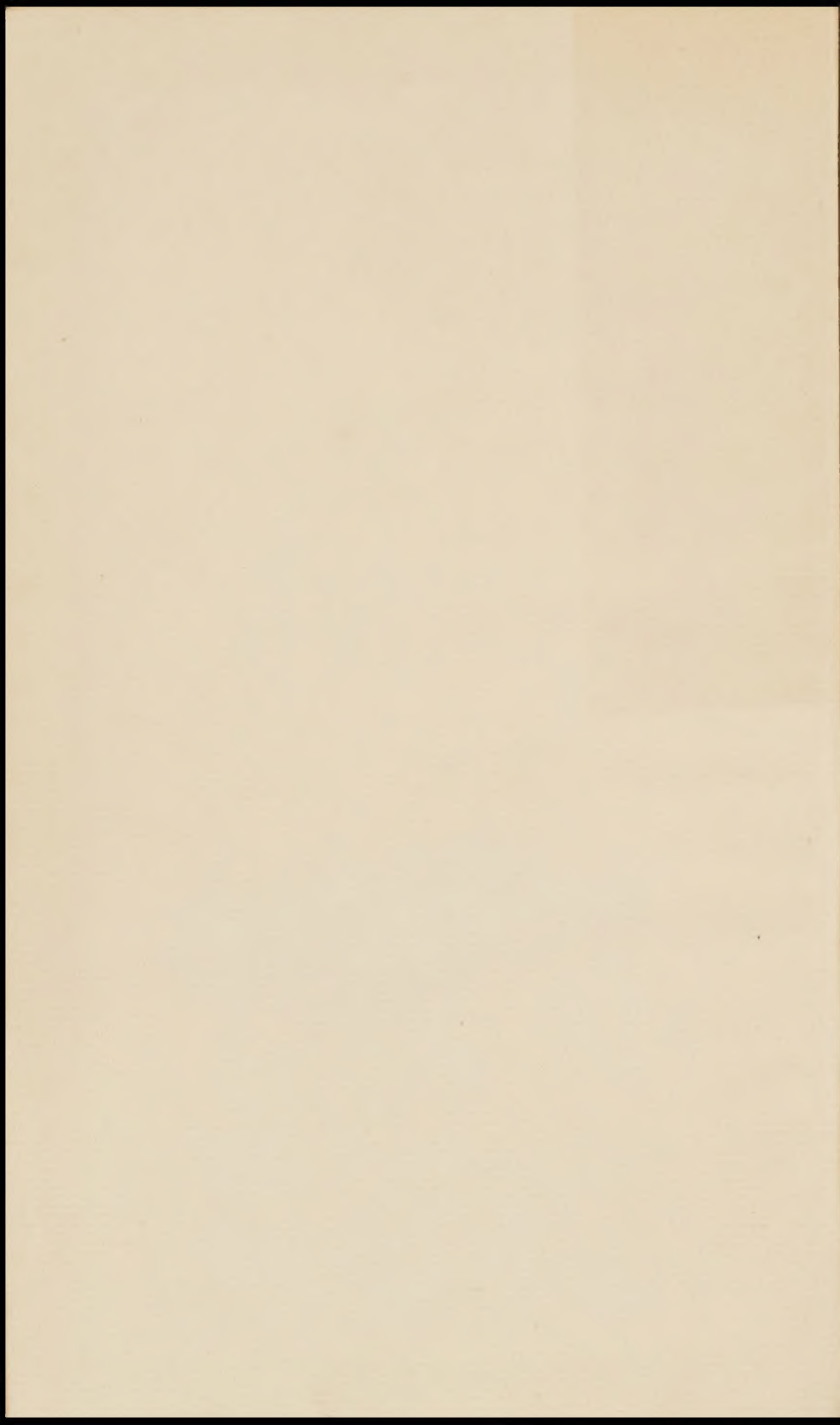












THE  
CAPTIVITY AND SUFFERINGS  
OF  
**GEN. FREEGIFT PATCHIN**

OF  
BLENHEIM, SCHOHARIE COUNTY,

**Among the Indians, under Brant,**  
*THE NOTED CHIEF,*

During the Border Warfare in the time of the American Revolution,  
NOW FIRST PUBLISHED :

*With some Account of the Person and Character of*

**JOSEPH BRANT.**

ALSO, TRAITS OF  
**MEXICAN TRADITION,**

Respecting the Flood of Noah, and the Confusion of the Ancient  
Language.

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**BY JOSIAH PRIEST.**

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IF, under the influence of gratitude, the noblest feeling of which the human soul is susceptible, the several recent congressional assemblies, at the seat of government, have remembered the blood of their forefathers, which was shed in the war of independence ; by ordaining that the surviving and hoary headed patriots of that war, shall receive remuneration from the treasury of the Union—the *only* method, in the power of the nation, of evincing that gratitude : shall we not, in the publication of this narrative, one among thousands equally interesting, be permitted also to express *our* gratitude at the recollection of their deeds, as it is the *only* method left to a common citizen of expressing feelings which throb about the heart, on a remembrance of those times of blood, “ which tried men’s souls.”

The time has come, when, to behold the person of an aged veteran of the revolution, is to rouse into action and life, not only veneration and respect, but also the sentiment of valour, moving the spirit to hold more dear, and more inviolable, the freedom their victories have given us ; and whether that veteran be clad in the habiliments of ruin and poverty, or of wealth, the virtuous sensation is the same.

In the publication of this narrative, we persuade ourselves, we do the cause of the love of country and of the Union, no disservice, as by it we snatch from oblivion one of those *beacon tales*, that shall light to victory in some future struggle for the rights of Americans.



It is but a little while, when it will be said, There is not a man alive who breathed the air of the revolution ; not one grey headed hero of that day of conflicts, bending over his staff along the streets ! When that time comes, when it shall be announced in some paragraph of the passing news, There lives not a man of the old war, all have sunken down to the common original ; a desolateness will come over the mind for a moment, as if bereft—as when the heads of families are departed.

The story which we are about to introduce to the attention of the reader, was once related by General PATCHIN, to a party of about forty members of the New-York Legislature, of which he was then a member, at the house of Governor CLINTON, to the high satisfaction of his auditors.

It so happened that the day the writer of this account visited General PATCHIN, for the purpose of receiving from himself, in detail, the story of his captivity and sufferings, that *just fifty years had transpired*, being the 7th of April, 1780, when he, with his companions, was surprised and taken prisoner, by the tories and Indians, under the conduct of *Brant*, of heroic, yet cruel memory.

At the commencement of his story, he used these words—while, by the curl of his lip, the starting tear, and the tremor of his aged limbs, he showed extreme agitation,—“ *This day is fifty years since I was taken by the Indians ! O, it was a day of trouble, a day of trouble !*”



## CAPTIVITY and SUFFERINGS

OF FREEGIFT PATCHIN, AMONG THE INDIANS, AS

RELATED BY HIMSELF.



IN the year 1780, myself as well as the whole population about the region of old Schoharie, was held in readiness by Col. Peter Vrooman, as minute-men, to be ready at a moment's warning, as the Tories and Indians were a watchful and cruel enemy. Around the region of the head of the Delaware, it was suspected there were persons who favored the cause of the British ; a small company of men, therefore, were sent out as spies upon them ; and also, if possible, to make a quantity of maple sugar, as an abundance of the maple grew there.

Of this little company, Captain Alexander Harper had the command. Fourteen persons were all that were sent out, among whom were myself, Isaac Patchin, my brother, Ezra Thorp, Lieutenant Henry Thorp, and Major Henry.

It was early in the month of April—the second day of the month—when we came to the place of rendezvous, a distance from the forts of Schoharie of about thirty miles. A heavy snow storm came on, during which about three feet of snow fell, in addition to that which was on the ground before.

We were not in the least apprehensive of danger, as the nearest fort of the enemy was at Niagara ; knowing also that Sullivan, the year before, had scoured the Chemung and Genesee countries, killed or driven the In-

dians to Canada ; also as it was winter, and the snow very deep, we supposed were circumstances of sufficient magnitude to prevent marauding parties effectually from approaching from that quarter, at that peculiar time.

We had *tapped*, as the sugar making phrase is, a great number of trees, finding the proper utensils at hand, as they had been before occupied in the same way, by the inhabitants, who were fled to other places for safety. A few hundred pounds of maple sugar, would have been a great acquisition, as the inmates of the forts, were in want of all things ; having been compelled to flee from their homes to Schoharie and other places of safety.

We had proceeded in our enterprise of sugar making, as merily as the fatiguing nature of the business would permit, a few days, when, on the 7th of April, 1780, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, we were suddenly beset and surrounded by forty-three Indians and seven Tories. The names of the Tories I forbear to mention, except two or three, of whom the reader will hear in the course of the narrative, the rest I have thought proper not to name, as their descendants are not chargeable with the misguided acts of their fathers ; and it is not my wish at this time of day to cast reflections and grieve the innocent.

So silent had been the approach of the enemy, that three of our number lay weltering in their blood, before I, or any of the rest, knew they were among us, as we were scattered here and there, busy with our work. I was not far from our captain, when I saw the Indians first, who was accosted by Brant, their leader, as follows :—  
 “ Harper I am sorry to find you here.” Why, said Harper, Captain Brant, are you sorry ? “ Because, he rejoined, I *must* kill you, though we were school mates in youth.” When he lifted and flourished his tomahawk over his head, ready to execute the deed, but suddenly,



as if paralyzed by a stroke of magic, stopped this act of murder, as if some new and important thought had crossed his mind—when he gazed at Harper with an eye as keen and deadly as a serpent, saying, “Are there any troops at the forts in Schoharie?” Harper perceived, in a moment, that the answer to this question would either save their lives or procure their instant death; for if he should say *No*, which would have been the truth, the Indians would have instantly killed them all, and then proceeded to old Schoharie, massacring as they went, and cut off the whole inhabitants before help could have been had from any quarter, and the enemy, as a wolf, when the morning appears, flees with the shades of the night.

Accordingly, he answered, “There are three hundred continental troops now at the forts, who arrived there about three days since.” But the whole of this statement was untrue; yet who will condemn the captain, and say the act would need much repentance, ere it should have obtained forgiveness.

On hearing this, the countenance of Brant fell, when he waved with his hand, a signal to the chiefs; stopped the massacre, and called a council of war; all of which, from the time Brant had brandished his hatchet over the head of Harper, had been but the work of a moment.

The eleven survivors were seized, pinioned, and turned all together into a hog pen, where they were kept till morning. A guard of Tories, with one Becraft by name, at their head, was set over them in the pen; a bloody villain, as will appear in the course of this account.

All night Brant and his warriors, with the Tories, were in fierce consultation whether the prisoners should be put to death, or taken alive to Niagara. The chiefs appeared swayed by Brant, whose influence prevailed over

the whole opposition of the murderous crew ; there was a reason for this, as will appear by and by.

While this question was pending, we could see plainly their every act through the chinks of the pen, as a monstrous fire was in their midst, and hear every word, though none of us understood their language but our captain, whose countenance we could perceive, by the light of the fire, from time to time changing with the alternate passions of hope and of fear, while the sweat ran copiously down his face, from the mere labour of his mind, although it was a cold night. And added to this, the sentry, the bloody Becraft, who was set as a guard, would every now and then cry out to us, " You will all be in *hell* before morning." But there we were, tied neck and heels, or we would have beat the pen about his head ; our captain whispered to us that his word was doubted by the Indians and tories, who were for killing us, and proceeding without delay to Schoharie.

At length the morning came, when Brant and his associate chiefs, five in number, ordered that Harper be brought before them. Here the question was renewed by Brant, who said, We are suspicious that you have lied to us ; at the same time he sternly looked Harper in the face, to see if a muscle moved with fear or prevarication. To which our captain answered with a smile, expressive of confidence and scorn, and at the same time descriptive of the most sincere and unvarying honesty, that every word which he had spoken, respecting the arrival of troops at Schoharie, was wholly *true*. His answer was believed ; at which moment not only their own lives were saved, but also those of hundreds of men, with helpless women and children, who have not known to this day, except the few to whom the story has been told, that so great a Providence stepped in between them and servitude, tortures and death.



It was extremely mortifying to Brant to be compelled to relinquish, at the very moment when he was ready to grasp the utmost of his wish, in the glory and riches he would have acquired in the completion of this enterprise. He had fed the hopes of his associate chiefs, warriors and Tories with the same prospects ; having calculated, from information long before received, that Schoharie was in a defenceless state, and dreaded no evil, which rendered it extremely difficult to restrain them from killing the prisoners, out of mere fury at the disappointment. — A few moments of consultation ensued, when the rest were ordered out of the pen. Brant now disclosed the whole plan of the expedition in English, expressing his regret at its failure ; stating that he and the other chiefs had with difficulty saved them from being scalped. And that he did not wish to kill them in cold blood now, they had been together a day and a night, and if they chose to go with him to Niagara as captives of war, they might, but if they failed on the way through fatigue or want of food, they must not expect to live, as their scalps were as good for him as their bodies.

They had no provisions with them, neither had they eat any thing as yet while we had been their prisoners, except what they had found in our sap-bush, which they had at first devoured with the rapacity of cannibals. — We now took up our line of march, with our arms strongly pinioned, our shoulders sorely pressed with enormous packs, our hearts bleeding at the dreadful journey before us, and the servitude we were exposed to undergo among the Indians ; or if *bought* by the British, imprisonment by sea or land, was our certain fate, at least till the end of the war, if we even survived the journey.

The snow was then more than three feet deep, and being soft, rendered it impossible for us prisoners to travel, as we had no snow shoes, but the Indians had ; a

part, therefore, of them went before us, and a part behind, all in Indian file ; so that by keeping their tracks we were enabled to go on, but if we happened to fall down the Indians behind would cry out, "*waugh Bostona.*" We had travelled about ten or twelve miles, when we came to a grist mill, situated on the Delaware, the owner of which welcomed this band of infernals, and gave them such refreshment as was in his power ; but to us, poor prisoners, he gave nothing, while we were made to sit apart on a log by the side of the road.

I shall never forget the cruelty of three or four daughters of this man, whose name I forbear to mention, out of pity to his desendants. These *girls* insisted that they had better kill us *then*, for if, by any means, we should ever get back, their own lives would be taken by the whig ; their father also observed to Brant that he had better have taken more scalps and less prisoners. When we were ready to proceed again, the miller gave Brant about three bushels of shelled corn, which was divided into eleven equal parts, and put upon our backs, already too heavily burdened. This corn was all the whole body of Indians and ourselves had to subsist upon from there to Niagara, except that which accidentally might fall in our way, a distance of more than three hundred miles, entirely a wilderness.

From this mill we travelled directly down the river ; we had not, however, gone many miles, when we met a man who was a tory, well known to Brant, by name Samuel Clockstone ; who seeing us the prisoners, was surprised, as he knew us, when Brant related to him his adventure, and how he had been defeated by the account captain Harper had given of the troops lately arrived at Schoharie. *Troops !* said Clockstone ; there are no troops at that place, you may rely upon it, Capt. Brandt. I have heard of none. In a moment the *snake eyes* of



Brant flashed murder, and running to Harper, said in a voice of unrestrained fury, his hatchet vibrating about his head like the tongue of a viper ; How come you to lie to me so ? When Harper, turning round to the tory, said, you know, Mr. Clocksone, I have been there but four days since ; you know since our party was stationed at the head of the river, at the sap-bush, that I have been once to the forts alone, and there were troops, as I have stated, and if Captain Brant disbelieves it, he does it at his peril.

That Harper had been there, as he stated, happened to be true, which the tory also happened to know ; when he replied, Yes, I know it. All the while Brant had glared intensely on the countenance of Harper, if possible to discover some misgiving there, but all was firm and fair ; when he again believed him, and resumed his march.

There was a very aged man by the name of Brown, who had not gone off with the rest of the families who had fled the country. This miserable old man, with two grand sons, mere lads, were taken by Brant's party, and compelled to go prisoners with us. The day after our meeting with the tory, as above noticed, this old man, who was entirely bald from age, became too weary to keep up with the rest, and requested that he might be permitted to return, and alleged as a reason, that he was too old to take part in the war, and therefore could do the king's cause no harm.

At this request, instead of answering him, a halt was made, and the old man's pack was taken from him,—when he spoke in a low voice to his grand sons, saying, that he should see them no more, for they are going to kill me ; this he knew, being acquainted with the manners of the Indians. He was now taken to the rear of the party, and left in the care of an Indian, whose face was

painted entirely *black*, as a token of his office, which was to kill and scalp any of the prisoners who might give out on the way. In a short time the Indian came on again with the bald scalp of the old man, dangling at the end of his gun, hitched in between the ramrod and muzzle.— This he often flapped in the boy's faces on the journey. The place at which this was done, was just on the point of a mountain not far from opposite where judge Foot used to live, on the Delaware, below Delhi. There he was left, and doubtless devoured by wild animals ; human bones were afterwards found on that part of the mountain.

We pursued our way down the Delaware, till we came to the Cookhouse, suffering very much, night and day, from the tightness of the chords with which our arms were bound. From this place we crossed through the wilderness, over hills and mountains, the most dismal and difficult to be conceived of, till we came to a place called Ochquago, on the Susquehannah river, which had been an Indian settlement before the war. Here they constructed several rafts out of old logs, which they fastened together by withes and poles passing crosswise, on which, after unticing us, we were placed, themselves managing to steer. These soon floated us down as far as the mouth of the Chemung river, where we disembarked and were again tied, taking up our line of march for the Genesee country.

The Indians we found, were more capable of sustaining fatigue than we were, and easily out travelled us, which circumstance would have led to the loss of our lives, had not a singular Providence interfered to save us ; this was the indisposition of Brant, who, every other day, for a considerable time, fell sick, so that the party were compelled to wait for him, this gave opportunity for to rest ourselves.



Brant's sickness was an attack of the fever and ague, which he checked by the use of a preparation from the rattlesnake. The rattlesnake he caught on the side of a hill facing the south, on which the sun shone, and had melted away the snow from the mouth of the den of those serpents ; when, it appears, one had crawled out, being invited by the warmth. The reader will also observe that about a fortnight had now elapsed from the time of their captivity, so that the season was farther advanced ; and added to this, the snow is sooner melted on the Chemung, in Pennsylvania, being farther south, by about three degrees, than the head of the Delaware ; yet in places even then, there was snow on the ground, and in the woods it was still deep. Of this snake he made a soup, which operated as a cure to the attack of the ague.

The reader will remember the three bushels of corn given at the mill ; this they fairly and equally divided among us all, which amounted to two handfuls a day, and that none should have more or less than another, while it lasted, the corns were counted as we received them ; in this respect Brant was just and kind. This corn we were allowed to boil in their kettles, when the Indians had finished theirs ; we generally contrived to pound it before we boiled it, as we had found a mortar at a deserted wigwam left by the Indians the year before, who had been driven away by Gen. Sullivan.—While in the neighbourhood of what is now called Tioga Point, we but narrowly escaped every man of us being butchered on the spot ; a miracle, as it were, saved us. The cause was as follows. At this place, when Brant was on his way down the Chemung, on this same expedition, but a few days before, he had detached eleven Indians from his company to pass through the woods from Tioga Point to a place called the Minisink. It was

known to Brant that at this place were a few families, where it was supposed several prisoners might be made, or scalps taken, which at Niagara would fetch them eight dollars a piece. This was the great stimulus by which the Indians in the revolution were incited by *Butler*, the British agent, to perpetrate so many horrid murders, upon women, children, and helpless old age, in this region of country.

This party made good their way to the Minisink, when lying concealed in the woods, they managed to get into their possession, one after another, five lusty men, and had brought them as far as to the east side of the Susquehannah, opposite Tioga Point. Here they encamped for the night, intending in the morning to construct a raft, in order to float themselves over the river, as they had done on their way toward the Minisink, a few days before, and so pursue their way up the Chemung, which course was the great thoroughfare of the Indians from the Susquehannah country to that of the Genesee.

Here, while the eleven Indians, lay fast asleep, being greatly fatigued, and apprehending no danger, as the prisoners were securely bound, and also sleeping soundly, as the Indians supposed, before they laid themselves down ; but as the soul of one man, the prisoners were ever watching some opportunity to escape.

But this was not possible, even if they could have made their escape, unless they should first have effected the death of the whole of the party of Indians. This object therefore was their constant aim. This night, by some means unknown, one of the prisoners got loose, doubtless, either by gnawing off his cord, or by chafing it in two as he lay on it, or during the day had managed to hitch it as often as he could against the snags of the trees, till it had become fretted and weak, in some place,



so that at last he got it in two. When this was effected, he silently cut the cords of his fellows, the Indians sleeping exceedingly sound ; when each man took a hatchet, and in a moment nine of them received their blades, to their handles, in their brains ; but the sound of the blows, in cutting through the bone of their heads, awaked the other two, who sprung upon their feet as quick as thought, when one of them, as they fled, received the blade of a hatchet between his shoulders, which, however, did not kill him, nor prevent his escape—yet he was terribly wounded. These men, who had so heroically made their escape, returned, as was supposed, to their homes to relate to their families and posterity the perils of that dreadful night.

After they had gone, the two Indians returned to the spot, where lay their ruthless but unfortunate companions, fast locked not only in the sleep of the night, but that of death, never more to torment the ear of civilized life with the death yell of their sepulchral throats. They took from the feet of their slaughtered friends, their mocasins, nine pair in number, and then constructed a float of logs, on which they crossed the river, and had proceeded a little way up the Chemung, where they had built a hut, and the well Indian was endeavouring to cure his wounded companion.

When the whooping of the party of Indians to whom we were prisoners, struck his ear, he gave the *death yell*, which rung on the dull air as the scream of a demon, reverberating, in doleful echoes, up and down the stream ; at which the whole body made a halt, and stood in mute astonishment, not knowing what this could mean ; when directly the two Indians made their appearance, exhibiting the nine pair of mocasins, and relating in the Indian tongue, which Harper understood, the death of their companions. In a moment, as if transformed to devils,

they threw themselves into a great circle around us, exhibiting the most horrid gestures, gnashing their teeth like a gang of wolves ready to devour, brandishing their tomahawks over us, as so many arrows of death. But here let it be spoken to the praise of a Divine Provideece, —at the moment when we had given ourselves up as lost—the very Indian, who was a chief, and had been the only one of the eleven who had escaped unhurt, threw himself into the midst of the ring, and with a shake of his hand gave the signal of silence, when he plead our cause, by simply saying, these are not the men who killed our friends, and to take the life of the innocent in cold blood, *cannot* be right.

As it happened, this Indian knew us all, for he had lived about Schoharie before the war, and was known as an inoffensive and kind hearted native, but when the war came on, had seen fit to join the British Indians; his words had the desired effect, arrested the mind of Brant, and soothed to composure the terrific storm, that a moment before had threatened to destroy us.

Again we resumed our course, bearing with considerably more patience and fortitude the anguish of our sufferings, than it is likely we should have done, had our lives not been preserved from a greater calamity, just described. We soon came to Newtown, where we were nearly at the point of starvation, Indians and all, as we had nothing to eat, except a handful or two of corn a day; and what the end would have been is not hard to foresee, had not the amazing umber of wolf tracks remaining, directed us to the carcass of a dead horse. The poor brute had been left to take care of itself, the summer before, by Sullivan, in his march to the Indian country, being unfit for further service as a pack horse. Here, on the commons of nature, which during the summer and fall, it is likely, produced an abundance of pastureage, but



when winter came on, and rendered it impossible for the poor worn out animal, to take care of itself—death came to its relief. That it had lived till the winter had become severe, was evident, from its not being in the least degree putrescent, but was completely frozen, it having been buried in the snow during the winter.

The wolves had torn and gnawed the upper side quite away, but not being able to turn the carcass over, it was sound and entire on the under side. This we seized upon, rejoicing as at the finding of hidden treasures ; it was instantly cut to pieces, bones, head and hoofs, and equally divided among the whole. Fires were built, at which we roasted and eat, without salt, each his own share, with the highest degree of satisfaction.

Near this place we found the famous *Painted Post*, which is now known over the whole continent, to those conversant with the early history of our country ; the origin of which was as follows. Whether it was in the revolution, or in the Dunmore battles with the Indians, which commenced in Virginia, or in the French war, I do not know ; an Indian chief, on this spot, had been victorious in battle, killed and took prisoner to the number of about sixty. This event he celebrated by causing a tree to be taken from the forest and hewed four square, painted red, and the number he killed, which was twenty-eight, represented across the post in black paint, without any heads, but those he took prisoners, which was thirty, were represented with heads on, in black paint, as the others. This post he erected, and thus handed down to posterity, an account that here a battle was fought, but by whom, and who the sufferers were, is covered in darkness, except that it was between the whites and Indians.

This post will probably continue as long as the country shall remain inhabited, as the citizens heretofore have

uniformly replaced it with a new one, exactly like the original, whenever it has become decayed.

Nothing more of note happened to us, till we came to the Genesee river, except a continued state of suffering. We passed along between the Chemung and the heads of the lakes Cayuga and Seneca, leaving the route of Sullivan, and went over the mountains farther north. These mountains, as they were very steep and high, being covered with brush, our bodies weak and emaciated, were almost insurmountable ; but at length we reached the top of the last and highest, which overlooks immeasurable wilds, the ancient abode of men and nations unknown, whose history is written only in the dust.

Here we halted to rest, when the tory Becraft, took it in his head to boast of what he had done in the way of murder, since the war began. He said that he and others had killed some of the inhabitants of Schoharie, and that among them was the family of one Vrooman. These, he said, they soon despatched, except a boy of about fourteen years of age, who fled across the flat, toward the Schoharie river. I took after the lad, said the tory and although he ran like a spirit, I soon overtook him, and putting my hand under his chin, laid him back on my thigh, though he struggled hard, cut his throat, scalped him, and hung the body across the fence. This made my blood run cold ; vengeance boiled through every vein, but we dare not say a word to provoke our enemies, as it would be useless. This man, however, got his due, in a measure, after the war was over ; which will be related at the end of this account.

Another of them, by the name of *Barney Cane*, boasted that he had killed one Major Hopkins, on Dimon Island, in lake George. A party of pleasure, as he stated, had gone to this island on a sailing excursion, and having spent more time than they were aware of, before they were



ready to return, concluded to encamp, and remain all night, as it would be impossible for them to return to the fort.

From the shore where we lay hid, it was easy to watch their motions; and perceiving their defenceless situation, as soon as it was dark, we set off for the island, where we found them asleep by their fire, and discharged our guns among them. Several were killed, among whom was one woman, who had a sucking child, which was not hurt. This we put to the breast of its dead mother, and so we left it. But Major Hopkins was only wounded, his thigh bone being broken; he started from his sleep to a rising posture, when I struck him, said Barney Cane, with the butt of my gun, on the side of his head, he fell over, but caught on one hand; I then knocked him the other way, when he caught with the other hand; a third blow, and I laid him dead. These were all scalped except the infant. In the morning, a party from the fort went and brought away the dead, together with one they found alive, although he was scalped, and the babe, which was hanging and sobbing at the bosom of its lifeless mother.

Having rested ourselves and our tantalizing companions having finished the stories of their *infamy*, we descended the mountains toward the Genesee which we came in sight of the next day about two o'clock. Here we were met by a small company of natives, who had come to the flats of the Genesee, for the purpose of *corn plunting*, as soon as the waters of the river should fall sufficiently to drain the ground of its water. These Indians had with them a very beautiful horse, which Brant directed to be cut to pieces in a moment, and divided equally, without dressing, or any such fashionable delay, which was done; no part of the animal whatever, being suffered to be lost. There fell to each man of the com-

pany but a small piece, which we roasted, using the *white* ashes of our fires as salt, which gave it a delicious relish ; this Brant himself showed us how to do.

On these flats were found infinite quantities of ground nuts, a root in form and size about equal to a musket ball ; which, being roasted, became exceedingly mealy and sweet. These, together with our new acquisition of horse flesh, formed a delicious repast.

From this place Brant sent a runner to Niagara, a distance of about eighty miles, in order to inform the garrison of his approach, and of the number of prisoners he had, their names and quality. This was a most humane act of Brant, as by this means he effected the removal of all the Indian warriors in the two camps contiguous to the fort.

Brant was in possession of a secret respecting Harper, which he had carefully concealed in his own breast during the whole journey, and, probably, in the very first instance, at the time when he discovered that Harper was his prisoner, operated by influencing him, if possible, to save his life. This secret consisted in a knowledge that there was then in the fort a British officer who had married a *niece* of Harper, Jane More, whose mother was the sister of Captain Harper. This girl, together with her mother and a sister, had been captured at the massacre of Cherry Valley, and taken to Niagara. This information was conveyed by the means of the runner, to the husband of Jane More, Captain Powel, who, when the girl was first brought by Butler and his Indians, a prisoner to the fort, loved, courted, and honorably married the girl.

Now, if Powell wished to save the life of his wife's uncle, he had the opportunity, by doing as Brant had suggested—that was, to send the warriors of both camps down the lake to the Nine Mile Landing, with the ex-



pectation of meeting Brant there, whose prisoners would be given into their hands, to be dealt with as the genius of their natures and customs might suggest. Accordingly, Powel told his wife that her uncle was among the prisoners of Brant, who had sent him word, and that the warriors *must* be sent away; to whom he gave a quantity of rum, as they thought, to aid in the celebration of their infernal pawwas, at the Nine Mile Landing, having obtained the consent of his superior, Col. Butler, to do so.

Brant had concealed, from both his Indians and Tories, as well as from the prisoners, that Powel, at the fort, was Harper's relative, or that he had made the above arrangement. The reader may probably wish to know *why* the warriors in those two camps *must* be sent away, in order to save the lives of the prisoners. All persons acquainted with Indian customs, in time of war, know very well that the unhappy wretch, who falls into their hands at such a time, is compelled to run what is called the gauntlet, between two rows of Indians, composed of warriors, old men, women and children, who, as the prisoner flies between, if possible, to reach a certain point assigned, called a council house, or a fort, receives from every one who can reach him, a blow with the fist, club, hatchet, or knife, and even wadding fired into their bodies, so that they generally die with their wounds before they reach the appointed place, though they struggle with all the violence of hope and despair.

We had now, on the fourth day after the runner had been sent, arrived within about two miles of Niagara, when the Tories began to tell us the danger we soon were to be exposed to, in passing those two Indian encampments, which, till then, we knew nothing of; this difficulty they were careful to describe in the most critical manner; so that every step, although so near our journey's end, when we hoped at last to have our hun-

ger satisfied, was as the steps of the wretch condemned to die. But on coming to the *first* encampment, what was our surprise and joy at finding nothing there capable of injuring us, but a few old women and children, who had indeed formed themselves as before described.— However, one old squaw coming, up in a very friendly manner, saluted *me*, by saying, poor *shild*, poor *shild*, when she gave me a blow, which, as I was tired, could not be parried, that nearly split my head in two.

Directly we came to the second encampment, which was supposed to be more dangerous, as the most bloody warriors were, from choice, situated nearest the fort; but here, through the policy of Powel, a whole regiment of British troops were thrown in two parallel lines, extending through the whole encampment, to protect us, as here were many young lads of the natives, quite able, if an opportunity was given them, to hack and club us to death, before we reached the fort.

But now the desired fort, although it was to be our prison house, was seen through the opening woods. I had come to within about five rods of the gateway, still agonizing under the effects of the old squaw's blow, when a young savage, about twelve years old, came running with a hatchet in his hand, directly up to me, and seizing hold of the *petump line*, or cord, by which I was tied, twitched me round, so that we faced each other, when he gave me a blow exactly between my eyes on the forehead, that nearly dropped me dead, as I was weak and faint, the blood spouted out at a dreadful rate, when a soldier snatched the little demon's hatchet, and flung it into the lake. Whether Brant was rewarded over and above the eight dollars, (which was the stipulated price per head,) for Harper, or not, I cannot tell; but as was most natural to suppose, there was on the part of himself and neice, great joy on so unexpectedly



falling in with friends and relations, in the midst of enemies, and on the part of Powell, respect and kindness was shown to Harper, on account of the lovely Jane, who had become a talisman of peace between them.

We had scarcely arrived, when we were brought to the presence of a number of British officers of the crown, who blazed in all the glory of military habiliments ; and among them, as chief, was the bloated, insolent, unprincipled, cruel, infamous *Butler*, whose name will *stink* in the recollections of men, to the latest page of American history ; because it was him who directed, rewarded, and encouraged the operations of the Indians and Tories all along from Canada to the state of Delaware. This man commenced, in a very abusive manner, to question us respecting the American affairs ; and addressing me in particular, probably because nearer me than any of the rest, whether I did not think that, by and by, his Indians would compel a general surrender of the Yankees ? I replied to him in as modest a manner as possible, not feeling in a mood of repartee, as the blood from the wound in my forehead still continued to trickle down my face, covering my vest and bosom with blood, that I did not wish to say any thing about it, nor to give offence to any one. But he would not excuse me ; still insisting that I should say whether I did not think so ; to which I firmly replied—feeling what blood and spirit there were yet remaining in me, to rouse a little—that if I *must* answer him, it was to say NO ; and that he might as well think to empty the lake of its waters at a bucket full a time, as to conquer the Yankees in that way. At which he burst out in a violent manner, calling me a *dam'd rebel*, for giving him such an insolent answer, and ordered me out of his sight ; but here, when ready to sink to the floor, (not from any thing the huge bulk of flesh had said to me, but from hunger, weariness, and the loss

of blood,) a noble hearted officer interposed, saying to Butler, The lad is not to blame, as you have compelled him to answer your question, which no doubt he has done, according to the best of his judgment. Here, poor fellow, take this glass of wine and drink. Thus the matter ended. [Here the old General wept, at the recollection of so much kindness, where he expected none.]

We were now given over to the care of a woman, Nancey Bundy by name, who had been ordered to prepare us a soup, made of proper materials, who was not slow to relieve our distress as far as she dare, as she was also a prisoner. But in taking off the belt which I had worn around my body, as the manner of the Indians is, to keep the wind out of the stomach, it appeared that I was falling to pieces, so strange was the sensation, that I was ready to disown my own body, had I not been convinced by my other senses that there was no mistake.

I will just give the reader a short account of this woman, as I received it from herself. She stated that herself, her husband and two children, were captured at the massacre of Wyoming, by the Butlers, Indians, and Tories, and brought to the Genesee country, then entirely inhabited by the natives. There she had been parted from her husband, the Indians carrying him she knew not where, but to some other and distant tribe. She had not been long in the possession of the tribe, with whom she had been left, after her husband was taken from her, when the Indian who had taken her prisoner, addressed her, and was desirous of making her his wife ; but she repulsed him, saying very imprudently, she had one husband, and it would be unlawful to have more than one. This seemed to satisfy him, and I saw him no more for a long time ; but after a while he came again, and renewed his suit, alleging that now there was no objection to her marrying him, as her husband was dead. for. said the In-



dian, I found where he was, and have killed him. I then told him if he had killed my husband he might kill me also, for I would not marry a murderer. When he saw I was resolute, and that his person was hateful in my sight, he took and tied me, and brought me to this place, and sold me for eight dollars. But where my husband is buried, or whether he is buried at all, or where my children are, I cannot tell ; but whether she ever returned to the states again, is beyond my knowledge.

From this prison, after being sold to the British garrison for eight dollars a head, we were sent across the lake to Carlton Island, from this place down to the Cedars, from the Cedars we were transported from place to place, till at length we were permanently lodged in the prison at Chamblee. Here we were put in irons, and remained two years, suffering every thing but death, for want of clothes, fire, food, medicine, exercise and pure air. At length, from the weight and inconvenience of my irons, I became so weak that I could not rise from the floor, when my fellow sufferer, Thorp, who was not as badly off as myself, used to help me up.

The physician appointed to have the care of the prisoners, whose name was Pendergrass, paid but little attention to his charge, seldom visiting us, but never examining closely into our situation ; consequently a description of my horrid condition would afflict the reader, on which account I forbear it. At length, however, this physician was removed, and another put in his place, of an entirely contrary character ; he was humane, inquisitive, industrious, and skilful.

When he came first to that part of the prison where myself and about twenty others were confined, the captain of the fort came with him, when the doctor proceeded, one by one, to examine us, instead of giving us a general look only, as the other had done. The place where

I sat was quite in one corner. I had chosen it, because it was the darkest, and served to hide me from observation more than any other part of the room. I had contrived to get into my possession an old rug of some sort, which partly hid my naked limbs ; this I kept over my lap, in the best possible manner.

After a while, it became my turn to be examined ; when he said, Well, my lad, what is the matter with you? From shame and fear lest he would witness the loathsome predicament which I was in, I said, Nothing, sir. Well, then, said he, get up. I cannot, sir, said I. He then took the end of his cane, and putting it under the blanket that was partly over me, and served to hide me from my waist downward, and threw it quite from me. When a spectacle of human suffering presented itself, such as he had not dreamed of seeing. I had fixed my eyes steadily on his face, to see if aught of pity moved his breast ; which I knew I could trace in his countenance, if any appeared. He turned pale ; a frown gathered on his brow, the curl of his lip denoted wrath ; when he turned round to the captain of the fort, whose name was Steel, and, looking sternly at him, said, in a voice of thunder, " You infamous villain, in the name of God, are you murdering people alive *here* ; send for your provost sergeant in a moment, and knock off that *poor fellow's* span shackles, or I will *smash* you in a moment !"

O, this language was balm to my wounds ; was oil to my bleeding heart ; it was the voice of sympathy, of determined mercy, and immediate relief. I had a soldier's heart, which shrunk not ; a fountain of tears ; I had none in the hour of battle ; but now they rushed out again, as if anxious to behold the man who, by his goodness, had drawn them from their deep seclusion.

An entire change of situation now took place ; our



health was recovered, which rendered my imprisonment quite tolerable. From this place, after a while, we were sent to Rebel Island, or Cutodelack, or Cutthroat Island, where we remained a year, when peace was declared. We were now sent to Montreal; then to Quebec; and then put on board a cartel ship, and sent round to Boston; though before we reached that place, we were driven out to sea in a storm, and nearly shipwrecked, suffering exceedingly; but at last arrived at the desired haven; where I once more set foot on my native land, and rejoiced that it was a land of liberty and Independence.

As fast as possible we made the best of our way to Old Schoharie, which was our home, after an absence of three years, during which I suffered much, as well as my companions, for the love of my country; which, under the blessing of Heaven, I have enjoyed these many years, feeling that it is a recompense in full measure. May He, who never lost a battle, perpetuate the blessing to those who have it, to the latest era of time.

The reader will recollect *Becraft*, the tory, who stood sentry over us during the first night of our captivity, in the sap-bush, who boasted he had cut the throat of a boy of the Vrooman family—this man had the audacity to return after the war to Old Schoharie, the scene of his villanies.

As soon as it was known, a number of persons properly qualified to judge his case; having, during their captivity, tasted a little of his ability to distress and tantalize unnecessarily; and remembering his deeds, which he had confessed boastingly on the mountains of the Genesee—hastened there and surrounded the house where he was. Two or three of the number, who were deeply indebted to his philanthropy, as need be, knocked at the door, and were bidden to come in; when the redoubtable getle-

man arose, respectfully inquiring after their health, and offering his hand ; the compliment was returned by a hearty and determined clench of his shoulders, by which he had the opportunity of making progress without the use of *hydraulics*, or locomotive power, as far as to a very ominous *staddle*, which stood not far off, in a beautiful grove of hickory. There were ten person in number, who composed this jury, and though they lacked two of the legal quantum, understood the case equally well nevertheless ; and as five of them happened to be left handed, and five who could swing the *right* honourable arm full as adroitly, they proceeded to an assortment of kind and character.

Becraft was stripped of the habiliments that covered a skin which shrouded a heart in which dwelt a spirit as bad as the devil's worst, and tied him to this clean smooth staddle, as fair an one as grew in the forrest. Ten fine excoriators, (gads,) were taken from the generous redundancy of the axe-handle tree, and given to each of those right and left handed gentlemen ; who, after binding the culprit, to save him the trouble of running away from the said staddle, began, after dividing themselves in due form, so that a circle was formed quite around him, to do as the spirit of the occasion might lead their minds.

Fifty lashes were declared by them a suitable expiation, to be placed upon the bare back, in such a manner as strength, and the exigency of the case, most rigorously demanded. Now, in the hour of judgment, a tenfold apparatus, that had the *pliancy* of examining the subject quite around, endeavoured to awake into life a *conscience* that had died an unnatural death, some years before.

A very commendable care, in resuscitating this invaluable principle, was taken, at the dawn of its opening into life, to inculcate what *particular* crime it was that had



operated with such deleterious influence ; and now, through the smarting medium of what is esteemed a *corrective*, as well as a *coercive*—an attempt was making not only to enliven the *conscience*, but to fix the affrighted *memory* on the horrible points *most* prominent in his life of depravity.

Now commenced the work of retribution. The first *ten* lashes played around him like the fiery serpents of the Great Saharah, hissing horror, when they said, “ Becraft, it is for being a tory, when your country claimed the services of those it had nurtured on its bosom, *you*, like a traitor stabbed it to the heart, as far as your arm had power.” The second *ten* lashes came with augmented violence, as if the arrows of vengeance were drinking deep of life’s keenest sensations : Becraft ! it is for aiding in the massacre of those who were your neighbours, the Vrooman family. A third series of *ten* lashes at a time, lapped their doleful hissing around his infamous body, as if Vulcan, from the infernal regions, had supplanted the hickory rods with tissues of red hot iron ; Becraft, it is for the murder of that helpless boy, the son of Vrooman, whom you scalped and hung on the fence.

A fourth quantum of ten lashes at once, played around him, as if the lightnings of some frowning cloud, streaming its direful fury at one selected victim, tearing anew, and entering deep into the quivering flesh : Becraft, it is for taunts, jeers, and insults, when certain persons well known to you were captives among a savage enemy, which marked you as a dastardly wretch, fit only for contempt and torture, such as is *now* bestowed on your infamous body.

Fifth and last series, of ten lashes a time, as if the keen sword, hot from the armory of an independent and indignant people had sundered the wretched body, one part to the zenith, the other to the nadir : Becraft, it is

for coming again to the bosom of that country upon which you have spit the venom of hate, and thus added insult to injury, never to be forgotten.

Here they untied him, with this injunction—to flee the country, and never more return, to blast, with his presence, so pure an atmosphere as that where liberty and independence breathe and triumph. With which, it was supposed, he complied, as he has never been known in these parts since. He expressed his gratitude that he had been so gently dealt with, acknowledging his conduct to have been worthy of capital punishment.

It is proper to state that General Patchin, whose narrative the reader is now acquainted with, is no more, having died at his estate in Blenheim, Schoharie county, a very short time after this account was written, 1830. He was a man of amiable manners, beloved and respected by his neighbors and a numerous acquaintance. He had acquired, in a fair and laudable manner, a genteel competency of this world's goods ; and also some small portion of its honours, as he had been sent a representative of the county of Schoharie to the state legislature ; which place, it is said, he filled with propriety, and usefulness to his constituents.

This veteran of the earlier struggle of our country for liberty, has at length fallen ; fallen as a tree of the forest, which had been pre-eminent among its fellows—whose foliage had adorned the wilderness, and given shelter to many a songster of the wood, and wandering animal of nature's common. The soldiers and heroes of the revolution, are, one after another, thinning away their venerable numbers from among the living ! In a little time it shall be said, They sleep the sleep of honour ! having carried with them to the tomb the most ardent love of country, and the admiration of surviving millions.

“ So sleep the brave, who sink to rest,

“ By all their country's wishes blest.”



SOME ACCOUNT OF  
**JOSEPH BRANT,**  
 THE COADJUTOR OF BUTLER, OF INFAMOUS MEMORY  
 IN THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION.



WE have supposed that, as Col. JOSEPH BRANT is conspicuous in the foregoing narrative, some account of his person and character, would not be unacceptable to the reader ; and as there yet are living many who have scarcely forgotten to tremble at the savage name of TAYADANAGA, or otherwise *The Brant*—we have here given some account of him, in part derived from Campbell.

Brant was a Mohawk Sachem, of great celebrity among his tribe, which was one of the most powerful of the Confederacy of the Five Nations. This confederacy consisted of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. The seat of their empire, or place of the great council of these five nations, was at Onondaga, which was near the centre of their immense territory.

The Mohawks, in particular, were a fierce and terrible nation ; even more so than the Pequots, under the government of king Philip, of Seaboard memory, in the region of Connecticut. The Mohawks, at the time of the first settlements of the English, along the coast of New-England, extended their conquests south nearly to the Gulf of Mexico, and eastward as far as to Connecticut river, and north into the Canadas, and west to the bank of the Mississippi. Trumbull, the historian of those early times, says it was difficult to find terms to express the abject and unbounded fear those tribes had

fallen under, among all the eastern Indians, at the name of the Mohawks.

If such tribes as they had subdued, neglected to pay the tribute which had been agreed on, the Mohawks would come down amongst them, plunder and destroy, carrying them into captivity at their pleasure. When any of them made their appearance in their country, the Connecticut Indians would instantly raise a cry from hill to hill—a Mohawk, a Mohawk!—and fly like sheep before wolves, without attempting the least resistance.

The Mohawks would cry out in the most terrible manner, We are come, we are come, to suck your blood. Of this dreadful race of warriors was Brant, with whom the early settlers along the Schoharie and the Delaware had to contend in the revolution. "The time of his birth, says Mr. Campbell, is not known; but in July, 1761, he was sent by Sir Wm. Johnson, to the "Moore Charity School," at Lebanon, Connecticut, established by the Rev. Dr. Wheelock, which was afterwards removed to Dartmouth, and became the foundation of Dartmouth College. The following mention of him is made in the memoirs of that gentleman.

"Sir William Johnson, superintendent of Indian affairs in North America, was very friendly to the design of Mr. Wheelock, and at his request sent to school, at various times, several boys of the Mohawks, to be instructed. One of them was the since celebrated Joseph Brant; who, after receiving his education, was particularly noticed by Sir William Johnson, and employed by him in public business.

He has been very useful in advancing the civilization of his countrymen; and for a long time past has been a military officer of extensive influence among the Indians in Upper Canada." It is said, by Mr. Campbell, that he translated the Gospel by St. Mark into the Mohawk



tongue, and had contemplated writing a history of the Six Nations.

The movements and warlike management of Brant, during the revolution, shew that in him were combined the natural sagacity of the Indian, with the skill and science of the civilized man, which qualified him as a formidable foe, and terror to the frontiers, In his passions and temperament of mind, he was vehement, yet in his intercourse he was affable and polite, communicating freely relative to his conduct.

He was often heard to say, that during the war he had killed but *one* man in cold blood, and that act he ever regretted. This one act, although it was but one, we cannot refrain from ranking it with murder, as Brant had been educated in a Christian school, and well understood the obligation of moral principle, as he did the laws of war. The case was as follows :

He had taken a man prisoner, and while he was examining him, the prisoner hesitated, and, as Brant thought, equivocated, which he considered obstinacy ; when, in a rage, he struck him down with his tomahawk. It afterwards turned out, that the man's apparent obstinacy was a natural hesitancy of speech, or stammer.

But we consider the following far more atrocious, although it is said that he was sorry for but the *one* act as above stated. At a certain time a skirmish took place with a body of our troops ; the action was a bloody one, in which Brant was shot in the heel, by a musket ball, but in the end the Americans were defeated, and an officer, and sixty men, were taken prisoners. The officer, after having delivered up his sword, had entered into conversation with Sir John Johnson, who, with his men, had also been engaged in the battle, as he commanded the British troops, but while this conversation was reciprocated in the most friendly manner, Brant, like a sly

Indian murderer as he was, stole behind the officer, and laid him dead at his feet, with a blow of his tomahawk. At this action Johnson was roused ; it was an act of treachery which he resented in the severest terms. To this Brant listened unconcernedly, and when he had finished, told him that he was sorry for his displeasure, but that his *heel* was extremely painful at the moment, he could not help revenging himself on the only chief of the party he saw taken ; and that since he had killed the officer, he added, his heel was much less painful. However, it is attempted to excuse this act, by saying, that Brant had reason to believe that there would be an attempt by the Americans to retake this officer ; and that as favoring this belief, the man lingered behind during their retreat.

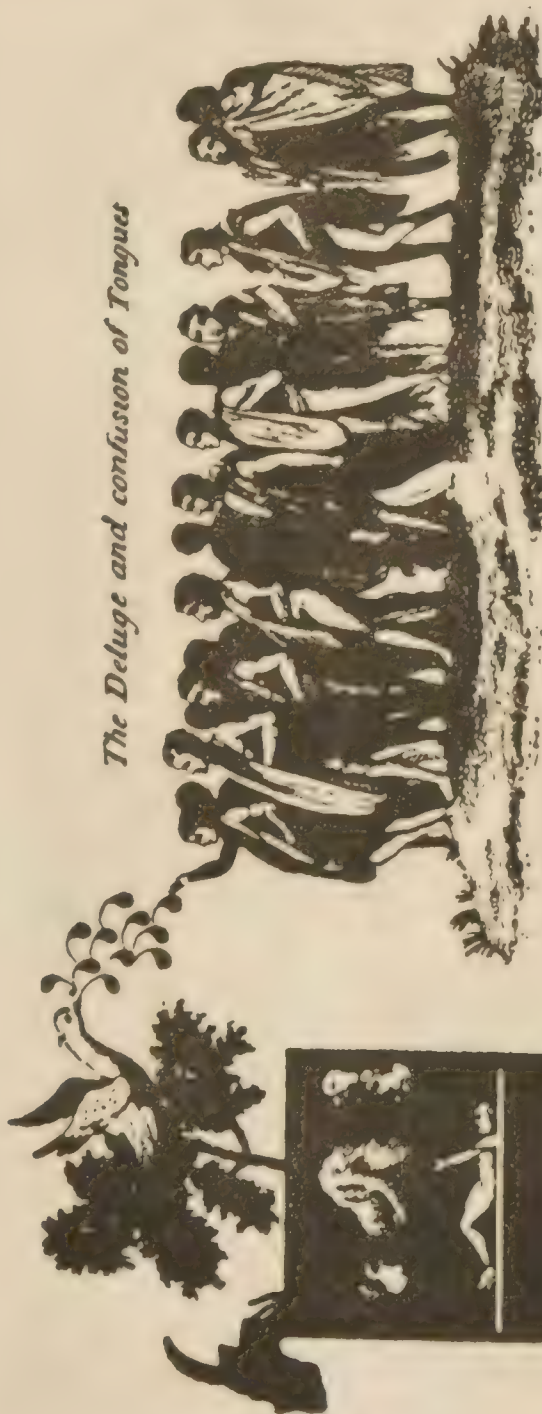
We are very far, however, from condemning Brant as being destitute of the noble-mindedness which always characterises, more or less, and softens the fierceness of the hero in battle. Several instances, to this effect, even to the enemy, might be enumerated ; yet after all, the above instances mark the savage, forcing its horrors through both the polish and moral principle which a Christian education had bestowed upon him.

“ In person, Brant was about the middle size, of a square stout build, fitted rather to endure hardships, than for quick movements. His complexion was rather lighter than that of most of the Indians ;” but he was not of a mixed origin, as has been supposed. “ He was married in the winter of 1779, to a daughter of Col. Craghan, by an Indian woman. The circumstances of his marriage are somewhat singular. He was present at the wedding of Miss Jane Moore, from Cherry Valley, who had been carried away a prisoner, and who married an officer of the garrison,” Powel, by name, as mentioned in Patchin’s Narrative.





*The Deluge and confusion of Tongues*



*See Page 35*

Brant had lived with his wife for some time previous, according to the Indian custom, without marriage ; but now insisted that the marriage ceremony should be performed, which was accordingly done. After the war he removed with his nation to Canada. There he was employed in transacting important business for his tribe. He went to England after the close of the war, and was honourably received there ; as he had a right to expect from the services rendered to the cause of the crown, in its war with America. "He died some sixteen years since at Brantford, Haldiman county, Upper Canada, where his family now reside ; who enjoy a reputation equal with the other distinguished citizens of the county, as it appears a son of his was, not long since, a member of the Colonial Assembly."

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### **A REMARKABLE CORROBORATION**

**OF SOME TRAITS OF THE MOSAIC HISTORY, FOUND AMONG  
SEVERAL ABORIGINAL NATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA.**

THE plate, or engraving, herewith presented, is a surprising representation of the Deluge of Noah, and of the Confusion of the Ancient Language, at the building of the Tower of Babel, as related in the Book of Genesis. See chap. 7 and 11.

We have derived the subject of this plate from Baron Humboldt's volume of Researches in Mexico, who found it painted on a manuscript book, made of the leaves of some kind of tree, suitable for the purpose, after the manner of the ancient nations of the sultry parts of Asia, around the Mediterranean.

Among the vast multitude of painted representations found by this author, on the books of the natives, made also frequently of prepared skins of animals, were delineated all the leading circumstances and history of the deluge of the fall of man, of the seduction of the woman by the means of the serpent, the first murder as perpetrated by Cane, on the person of his brother Abel.

The plate, however, here presented, shows no more than a picture of the flood, with Noah afloat on a raft, or as the traditions of some of the nations say, on a tree, a canoe, and some say even in a vessel of huge dimensions. It also shows, by the group of men approaching the bird, a somewhat obscure history of the confusion of the ancient language, at the building of Babel, by representing them as being born dumb, who receive the gift of speech from a dove, which flutters in the branches of the tree, while she presents the languages to the mute throng, by bestowing upon each individual a leaf of the tree, which is shown in the form of small commas suspended from its beak.

The circumstance of their being born dumb, points out as clearly as tradition can be expected to do, the confusion of language; as being dumb, is equivalent to their not being able to converse with each other, or their not being able to converse, was equivalent to their being born dumb.

We give the account according to Humboldt, as follows: "Of the different nations that inhabit Mexico, paintings representing the deluge of Coxcox, or Tezpi, their name for Noah.

The Chinese nations call him, in their traditions, Fohi, which, in the termination of the last syllable, and of the whole word being but two syllables, sound very similar. Of these nations he names the Miztecks, Zapotecks, the Tascaltecks, and the Mechocange, among whose paint-



ings were found these singular representations. He saved himself, they say, conjointly with his wife, in a bark, or some say, in a canoe, others, on a raft, which they call in their language, a huahuate.

The painting of which the plate, is the representation, shows Tezpi, or Noah, in the midst of the waters, lying on his back. The *mountain*, the summit of which is crowned by a tree, and rises above the waters, is the peak of Colhucan, the Ararat of the Mexicans. The horn which is represented on the hieroglyphic, is the mountain Colhucan. At the foot of the mountain, on each side, appear the heads of Noah and his wife. The woman is known by the two points extending up from her forehead, which is the universal designation of the female sex among the Mexicans.

In the figure of the bird, with the leaves of a tree in its beak, is shown the circumstance of the dove's return to the Ark, when it had been sent out the second time, bringing a branch of the olive in its mouth ; but in their tradition it had become misplaced, and is made the author of the languages. That birds have a language, was believed by the nations of the old world. Some of those nations retain a surprising traditional account of the deluge ; who say that Noah embarked in a spacious *acalli* or boat, with his wife, his children, several animals, and grain, the preservation of which was of great importance to mankind. When the Great Spirit, Tezcatlipoca, ordered the waters to withdraw, Tezpi, or Noah, sent out from his boat a vulture. But as the bird's natural food was that of dead carcasses, it did not return, on account of the great number of those carcasses, with which the earth, now dried in some places, was strewed.

Tezpi sent out other birds, one of which was the humming bird ; this bird alone returned again to the boat, holding in its beak a branch, covered with leaves.

Tezpi now, knowing that the earth was dry, being clothed with fresh verdure, quitted his bark near the mountain Colhucan, which is equivalent to that of Ararat.

The purity of this tradition is evidence of two things : First, that the book of Genesis, as written by Moses, is not as some have imagined, a cunningly devised fable, as these Indians cannot be accused of Christian priestcraft, nor yet of Jewish priestcraft, their religion being solely of another cast, wholly idolatrous. And second, that the continents of America, Africa and Asia, were anciently united, so that the earlier nations came directly over after the confusions of the ancient language and dispersion—on which account, its purity has been preserved more than among the more wandering tribes of the old continents.

As favoring this idea, of their coming immediately from the region of the tower of Babel, their tradition goes on to inform us, that the tongues distributed by the bird were infinitely various, who dispersed over the earth ; but that it so happened, that fifteen heads of families were permitted to speak the same language, these are the same shown on the plate. These travelled till they came to a country which they called Aztalan, supposed to be in the regions of the now United States, according to Humboldt. As favoring this idea, we notice the word *Aztalan*, signifies in their language *water*, or a country of much water. Now, no country on the earth better suits this appellation than the western country, on account of the vast number of lakes found there.

There is another particular in this group of naked, dumb human beings worthy of notice, which is, that neither their countenances nor form of their persons, agree at all with the countenances or formation of the common Indians, they suit far better to the face of the

ancient Britains, Greeks, Romans Carthagenians and Phœnicians.

If so, it is evident that the Indians are not the first people who found their way to this country. Among these ancient nations, are found many more traditions corresponding to the accounts given by Moses respecting the creation, the fall of man by the means of a serpent—the murder of Abel by his brother, &c. ; all of which are denoted in their paintings, as found by the earlier travellers among them, since the discovery of America by Columbus, and carefully copied from their books of prepared hides, which may be called parchment, after the manner of the ancients of the earliest ages.

We are pleased when we find such evidences as it goes to the establishment of the truth of the historical parts of the Old Testament, evidence so far removed from the sceptics charge of priestcraft here among the unsophisticated nations of the earlier people of America.

Clavigero, in his history of Mexico, says that among the Chiapanese Indians, was found an old manuscript in the language of that country, made by the Indians themselves, in which it was said, according to their ancient tradition, that a certain person, named *Votan*, was present at that great building, which was made by order of his uncle, in order to mount up to heaven ; that then every people was given its language, and that *Votan* himself was charged by God to make the division of the lands of Anahuac—so Noah divided the earth among his sons.

Of the ancient Indians of Cuba, several historians of America relate, that when they were interrogated by the Spaniards concerning their origin, they answered, they had heard from their ancestors that God created the heavens, and the earth, and all things : that an old man having foreseen the deluge with which God designed to



chastise the sins of men, built a large canoe and embarked in it with his family and many animals ; that when the inundation ceased, he sent out a raven, which because it found food suited to its nature to feed on, never returned to the canoe ; that he then sent out a pigeon which soon returned, bearing a branch of the *Hoba* tree, a certain fruit tree of America, in its mouth ; that when the old man saw the earth dry, he disembarked, and having made himself some wine of the wood grape, he became intoxicated and fell asleep ; that then one of his sons made ridicule of his nakedness, and that another son piously covered him ; that upon waking, he blessed the latter and cursed the former. Lastly, these Islanders held that they had their origin from the accursed son, and therefore went almost naked ; that the Spaniards, as they were clothed, descended perhaps from the other.

Many of the nations says Clavigero, of America, have the same tradition, agreeing nearly to what we have already related. It was the opinion of this author, that the nations who peopled the Mexican empire, belonged to the posterity of Naphtuhim—(the same we imagine with Japheth ;) and that their ancestors having left Egypt not long after the confusion of the ancient language, travelled towards America, crossing over on the isthmus, which it is supposed once united America with the African continent, but since has been beaten down by the operation of the waters of the atlantic on the north, and the southern ocean on the south, or by the operations of earthquakes.

THE EXTRAORDINARY  
**FEATS and ESCAPES**  
 OF  
**DAVID ELERSON,**  
 IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

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THIS veteran of the revolution now lives in Broome, Schoharie Co. on the Plauterkill creek, and is a respected and valuable citizen, a member of the Baptist church—on which account we rely on his statements as being true. These the publisher received from his own lips, and are now, for the *first* time, offered to the public.

Elerson is a Virginian by birth, whose exterior appearance, although far advanced in years, denotes that in the days of his youth, strength nerved his arm ; and the kindling of his eye, at the recital of the sanguinary tale, evinced the deep hold the revolution has still of his affections ; as well as that he possessed the decision of character necessary for the prompt achievement of fearful deeds.

He states that he entered the service in 1776, under Col. Morgan, the well known “ old wagoner,” as the British called him ; and that, in 1778, he was in the Monmouth battle, in the state of New-Jersey, but escaped unhurt. He was also with Lord Dunmore, in his war with the Indians, in Virginia, where he received a dangerous wound, from a shot of the enemy—the bullet

entering at the top of his left shoulder, came out at his left breast, the scar of which is dismal to look at. It happened as follows : A body of Indians had hidden themselves behind a fallen tree, which had been blown down by the winds, over which they were shooting with horrible effect among the soldiers of Dunmore. Elerson being of a daring spirit, determined, at the imminent risque of his life, to oust them, if possible, from this skulking place. In order to this, he dropped down upon the ground, with his rifle in his hand, and crept on his belly toward the roots of the tree, which was loaded with earth, cleaving to its roots, behind which he intended to secrete himself, in order to get a shot or two through the openings of its roots, at the savages shrouded by its trunk. This he effected, notwithstanding before he reached the spot, a ball, which was probably a random shot, struck him on the shoulder, as already described.

A few days after the battle at Monmouth, Col. Morgan, with a detachment of two or three companies of his riflemen, followed the retreating army of General Clinton, as far as Middleton, where the British had halted a short time. At this place Elerson requested of Morgan for himself and three others—by name Murphy, (the same who was afterwards so fatal to the Indians, in Old Schoharie,) Wilbur, and Tufts—liberty to follow on after them toward Sandy-hook, where the army of Clinton was supposed to be in the act of crossing over to Staten-Island. The request was granted, but not without an earnest charge by Morgan, to take care of themselves. They had gone but a little way on the route, when they came to a deserted house, and stopped to look about, and reconnoitre the premises. Elerson said to his companions that if they would remain at the house, and keep a good look out, he would go a little distance where there were some horses belonging to the British, and examine



them. He did so ; but on his return his companions were all missing. On passing on a little farther, he found the road parted two ways ; he took one and pursued it, hoping to overtake them, as he supposed they were gone in one of these roads, but he had taken the wrong, and missed them.

In a few minutes, however, he came within sight of the operations of Clinton's army, and found they had effected a safe landing on Staten-Island, by making a bridge of their boats, and that the British fleet lay there. There was nothing remaining which they had not carried over, except forty or fifty horses, and a number of wagons ; but among the mass of baggage and lumber of war, he discovered a coach or phæton, which he supposed to belong to General Clinton. Now it flashed across his mind that he would make a prize of this phæton, and a pair of horses to draw it with, although he perceived it was under the protection of two sentinels. He now darted out of the road, under the cover of the thick foliage which grew along the shore, in this way secreting himself from the view of the sentinels, till within about twenty yards of them, when he shouted to them to surrender in a moment, or they were dead men, at the same time bringing his rifle to his face, ready to guide a bullet through the heart of one at least. At sight of this dreadful instrument, one of the sentinels let fall his gun into the water, from mere fright, as he stood exactly on the edge of the beech. On seeing this he felt assured that his gun was incapacitated to do him harm, as its charge was now wet. The other man, on seeing what had happened, plunged into the water with his horse, but the current of the tide proved too strong, and soon forced him to return. By this time he had taken the other sentinel into custody, and ordered him forthwith to harness as good a pair of horses as was among them, to

the phæton, or he would shoot him, on which account the command went speedily into execution.

Now the other sentinel made rapidly toward him, till within a short distance, then wheeled abruptly off, riding quite around the wagons, coach and all, which manœuvre was supposed a mere preamble, till a convenient moment might be seized upon to shoot Elerson, as the trooper appeared to make several sly attempts to draw a pistol from a side pocket, situated in his bosom. All this time he had been warned to go quite away, or give himself up, unless he wished to be shot ; but he either did not understand, or did not fear the threats of Elerson ; notwithstanding his rifle was levelled constantly at him, he continued to evince a determination to try his pistol. Our hero did not like to fire upon him, on his own account, as the report would certainly rouse the attention of the whole British army and fleet, which were in full and fair view ; their cannon was what he dreaded. However the sentinel persisted, and when in the very act of drawing the pistol from his pocket, received the blazing bullet of Elerson through his presumptuous heart ; he tumbled headlong to the earth, and struggled out his life on the sand. The sharp, shrill report of the rifle echoed up and down the shores of the channel, and struck the ear of some artillery-men, who, ere he was aware of it, planted a cannon shot near his feet, but fortunately did not injure him. In a moment or two a flash admonished him that he had better dodge, as another pelter must be on its way ; this passed over him, and struck between two wagons, and settled in the ground, as it was a sandy soil.

By this time the vehicle was ready, when he sprang into it, and rode way, coach, prisoner and all, amid the roar of old England's blazers, which had no power to touch the intrepid Virginian, whose day's work



amounted to several hundred dollars. Two companies of Morgan's riflemen were now sent to the northward, as far as Albany, in which Elerson and his three companions, above named, were included, under the command of Captain Long.

From Albany they were sent immediately to Old Schoharie, where the Indians and tories were devastating, murdering and carrying off, in concert, captives to Canada. Here they joined Col. Butler, of the Pennsylvania line, as rangers. The first service an which they were sent, was to take, dead or alive, a person strongly suspected of toryism, living on the Charlotte river, by the name of Service, who was not only torified in principle, but was an active agent of the British in aiding, victualing and secreting the enemies of the revolution. While prosecuting their way through the woods, when not far from the place now called Gilboa, a doleful region of gulfs and precipices, lying along on either side of the Schoharie creek, toward its head, they surprised and took prisoner, a man who, on examination, was found in possession of a letter from a certain Captain Smith, who was a tory, to the very man on the Charlotte, whom they had started in pursuit of—namely, Service.

This Smith had raised his company about Catskill and along the North river, and was then on his way to Niagara, and had sent this man forward to apprise the tory on the Charlotte that he must be in readiness to furnish his men with such refreshments as he could, and to aid them with provisions for the journey. They now altered their course, being determined, if possible, to fall in with, and cut to pieces, this Smith and his company—enquiring of the prisoner what way they would probably come, who from fear dare not deceive them. They now hastened on up the stream as secretly as possible, and had come to the flats where the bridge now crosses the Schoharie, on the Patauvia road. Elerson and his fel-



low riflemen were on the east side of the creek, when, from a certain spot, they discovered the party on the opposite side on the flat. Elerson and his captain happened to be close together, when they dropped on their knees behind a tree, the rest of the company might probably have made some noise, by treading on dry brush, which it is likely Smith might have heard, as he came out in an open place, looking here and there, wholly exposing his person, when Captain Long and Elerson both aimed their rifles at his breast ; a flash, a groan, and he weltered in his blood, a victim of that justice which watched over the fortunes of the revolution.

Several of the party were now wounded, the rest fled in consternation to their houses ; thus were the machinations of a deluded set of men dissipated by the untiring vigilance of a small band of our patriotic forefathers.

This work finished, Capt. Long and his men changed their course for the Charlotte, in pursuance of their first intention ; where they arrived, and silently surrounded the house of the person sought for, gathering closer and closer, till at length two or three entered the room where he was, before they were discovered : he instantly stepped out of the door with them, when he was informed that they had orders to take him to the forts at Schoharie. He appeared somewhat alarmed, while he strenuously objected to the proposal, pleading innocence, &c., but in the mean while was evidently working his way along from the door to a heap of chips lying between Elerson and Murphy. The reason now appeared why he had so cautiously approached the chips, for on coming to the spot, he seized in a moment a broad axe, which lay there, and made a desperate stroke at Murphy, which, however, he eluded, as the keen eye of that veteran was not asleep, but the fruitless attempt rolled back in vengeance on its author, as a bullet from the rifle of Mur-

phy stretched him a lifeless corse, with the axe in his hand.

The next year, in the month of July, Long's riflemen had orders to move under Col. Butler, in connexion with other troops, in all amounting to 700, to Springfield, at the head of Otsego Lake, where they were to await the arrival of Gen. George Clinton and the troops expected with him, all of whom, when there concentrated, were to pass down the Susquehannah, to form a junction with General Sullivan at Tioga Point. The object of this arrangement, was a destruction of the Indian tribes on the Chemung and Genesee rivers; who had so often been employed in small parties by the policy of the British, to distress, in a predatory manner, the inhabitants of the frontiers; the leader of whom was generally Tayadanaga, or, the Brant.

Now, whilst the troops were stationed at Springfield, Elerson, on a certain day, thought he would go to a place where he had observed a quantity of mustard growing around a deserted old house; a small clearing having been made at this spot a year or two before,—his object was to gather a dinner of herbs for himself and mess. The place was distant from the camp about a mile, where he had been busily employed till his haversack was nearly half full. Round about this house the weeds and sprouts had grown thick and high. As he was stooping to gather the mustard, he thought he heard a rustling in the weeds behind him, when, looking round, there were ten or a dozen Indians just ready to spring upon him, and take him prisoner. That they chose to take him prisoner, rather than shoot him, he inferred from their not having done it, as the most ample opportunity had been afforded, the nearness of the fort might have deterred them, or they may have wanted him alive as a victim of torture. But as he sprang to seize his rifle, which stood against the house, their hatchets were hurled sufficiently swift



and numerous to have cut him to pieces, if they had all hit him ; however, he sustained no injury, except the middle finger of one hand, which was nearly cut off,

He secured his rifle and sprang off in the opposite direction, with the speed of an arrow, leaving his haversack and greens behind. There lay between him and the woods, an open space of ground, which was thickly covered with sprouts and weeds, having once been cleared ; through this he had to run before he could reach the woods. But on coming to the edge of this open space, he found his way obstructed by a hedge fence made of fallen trees, into which he plunged, struggling and leaping to get through ; at this awful moment he heard behind him a full volley of their rifles discharged at the same instant ; bullets whizzed and pattered about him, among the old timber and trees. Yet he escaped unhurt. It was about eleven o'clock of the forenoon ; he now had the start of the Indians, as they had yet to load their rifles, and to scale the hedge fence ; having cleared all obstacles, he plunged into the woods, straight forward, not knowing whither he was running, From eleven until three he had not slackened his pace, more than compelled to do, by the situation of the ground over which he had run, when he perceived himself headed by an Indian. He stopped and drew up his rifle to shoot him, but he had disappeared, when, before his rifle was taken from his eye, a bullet, from another direction, had pierced his side, which proved, however, only a flesh wound, as it passed just above the hip joint, between the cuticle and peritoneum, coming out near the spine.

He was now convinced that he was surrounded, tho' by an invisible enemy. Again he renewed his flight, till coming directly to the brow of a mountain, he descended it like a chased deer, but on reaching its foot found there a small brook, which, in crossing, he scoop-



ed with his hand a little water to his mouth, as his tongue was bloated and hung out, from excessive heat and thirst. As he tasted the water, he cast an eye behind him, when he perceived an Indian alone, just breaking over the brow of the hill, in full spring after him ; he now darted out of the brook, and up a shallow bank, hiding himself behind the dark shade of a monstrous hemlock.

Now, as a fair opportunity offered to shoot this Indian, he raised his rifle, but found it impossible to take aim, as he shook very much from fatigue, perturbation of mind, and the anguish and bleeding of his wounds. But dropping flat down, he rested his piece on the root of the tree, having now no doubt but the moment he touched the trigger of his unerring rifle, the enemy would finish his course. So it turned out. He fired ; the Indian reeled, and fell, tumbling headlong on the side of the declivity. He now reloaded ; returned the ramrod to to its slide, and primed the faithful rifle, when at that instant, the whole company of his pursuers burst over the hill, true to the scent ; but on coming where their expiring fellow weltered in his blood, a yell, horrible as shrill, tore the air, reverberating among the dense forest, in sign, as their custom is, of the presence of death.— It was the death yell.

He now gave up all as lost, as his pursuers were so near, but had calculated to fetch to the ground one or two more, before they should seize him, but as he perceived they still lingered about their dying comrade, a thought crossed his mind that *one* struggle more, and he might possibly escape.

Again he sprang off ; but soon encountered the brook, whose dark winding course, overhung with a dense grove of low hemlocks, offered a secure retreat, as also his tracks were lost in the oblivious waters. Having followed this stream some small distance, he sprang into the

thicket of hemlocks, where, finding a hollow tree, which was fallen down, he crept into it, where he lay secure, as the Indians pursued him no farther ; being, it is likely, terrified at the death of their chief runner and warrior. Sleep soon overpowered him in his dreary bed, from which he awoke not till the next morning ; when he backed out of the log, he found it rained, and added to this, which greatly augmented the horror of his situation, he was *lost*. Here he remained two days and nights in the tree, without food, or dressing for his wounds, as the weather did not clear up ; and besides he feared the Indians might still be lurking about.

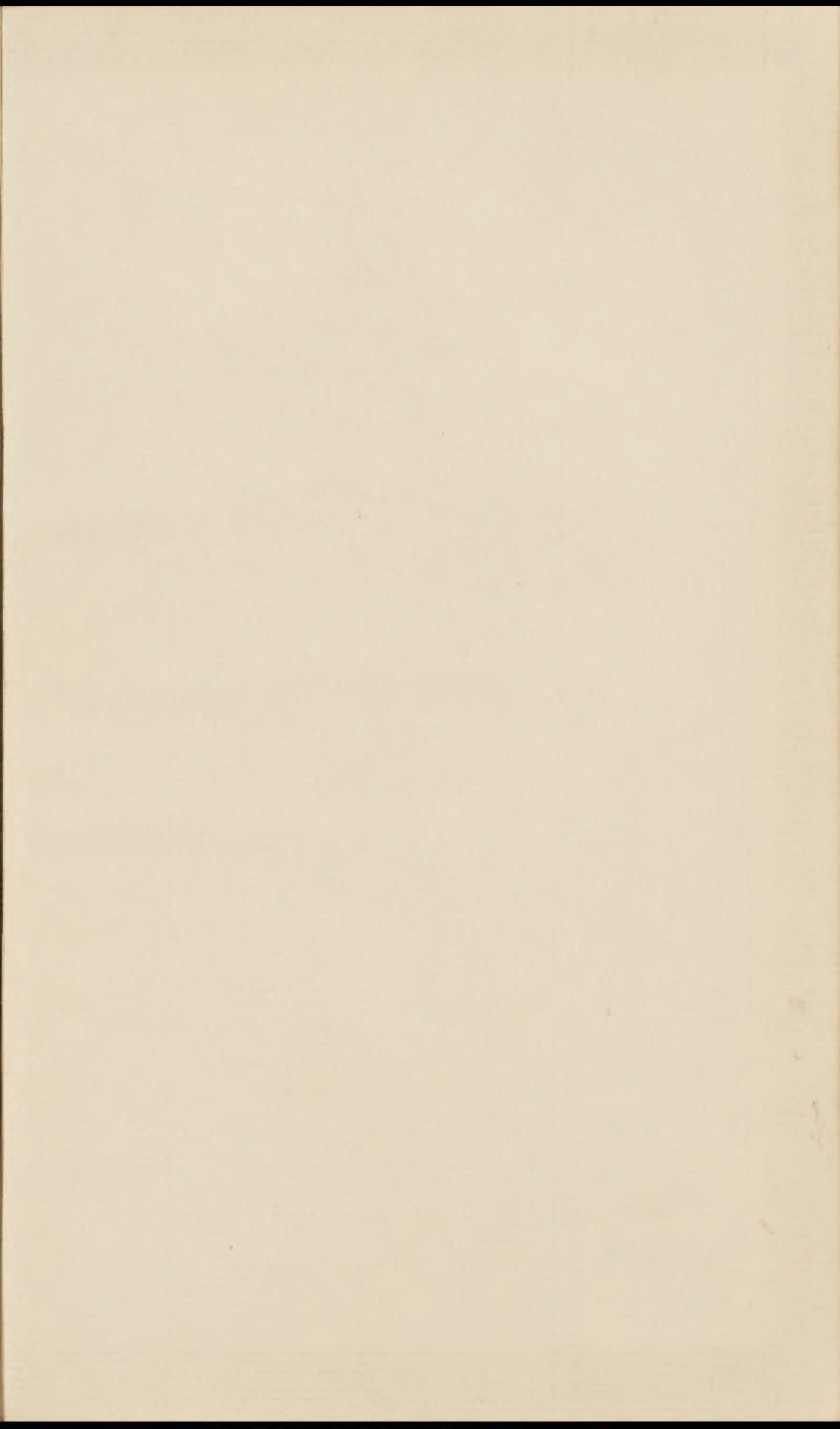
But on the third day, from that on which the Indians surprised him, the sun rose clear ; when he was able to shape his course, and came out at Brown's mills, in Cobleskill, a distance from where he had lodged in the hollow tree, of only about three miles ; having run, from where he was gathering herbs, at least twenty-five miles, from eleven in the morning, till he entered the log, pursued by a band of savages, who thirsted for his blood and to make his body a subject of torture.

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\*256

P245

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